

# Grace Christian Academy Scholarship Fund

## Program Guidelines

2023-2024 School Year

187 Lewiston Rd., W. Gardiner, ME 04345

### **I. Purpose: Mission of Grace Christian Academy Scholarship Fund (GCASF)**

Our mission is to open the doors of opportunity for families who have a desire to send their children to Grace Christian Academy (GCA) but are in need of financial assistance. We do this by providing tuition assistance to families who have demonstrated their financial need as measured by standards similar to the Federal school lunch program.

Our scholarships are available to students in grades Kindergarten through twelve.

Parental involvement in the education of their children is a critical element to success. By directly contributing to the education of their children, families affirm their vital stake in that education. Accordingly, our Fund offers no more than 50% of a family's total tuition cost for all children attending GCA. The remainder of the cost is arranged between the parent or guardian and the school.

Christian education is more effective the longer it is sustained. GCASF is committed to continuing to provide scholarships to recipients as long as they are enrolled at GCA, continue to demonstrate financial need and follow the program guidelines as long as funds are available.

### **II. Selection of Awardees**

#### **A. Eligibility Requirements**

##### **1. Enrollment**

Awardees must be enrolled at GCA and have paid their enrollment and curriculum fees.

##### **2. Income\***

a) The total household income must fall below the guidelines set each year by the GCASF.

b) "Income" includes:

(1) Adjusted gross income reported to the Federal government

(2) Income reported to foreign governments (for legal alien residents)

(3) Child support and alimony

(4) Unemployment and disability benefits

(5) Pension payments

(6) Public assistance, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Supplemental Security Income, food stamps, housing subsidies and all other benefits paid by federal, state or local governments to any members of the household

(7) Other miscellaneous cash income

- c) Income is measured by the most recent calendar year completed, not by the last 12 months.
- d) A “household” includes all persons living at the same address and/or all persons for whom the head of household claims financial responsibility.
- e) The maximum income standards for the 2023-2024 academic year scholarship awards are as follows:

Family of	2	\$35,496
	3	\$44,748
	4	\$49,950
	5	\$63,252
	6	\$72,504
	7	\$81,756
	8	\$91,008

For each additional family member add \$9,252

- f) Additional consideration will be given to families sending multiple children to GCA.
- g) The scholarship committee may take other family issues into consideration.

**B. Proof of income eligibility**

A copy of the 1040 Tax return is the preferable form of proof of eligibility. If more than one person has custody and they file separate income tax returns, then copies of both returns should be provided if possible.

- 1. If the household reports all income, as defined by GCASF, to the Federal government in the 1040 tax return this is sufficient proof of income.
- 2. Acceptable forms of tax statements include:
  - a) Copy of 1040A Standard Tax Return that was filed.
  - b) Computer printed form obtained by request from the IRS

**C. Choosing Awardees**

- 1. Awardees will be selected from all eligible applicants, as funds are available and according to the greatest need.
- 2. The final decision is made by the School Committee of GCA and any questions regarding the awarding of a scholarship should be directed to the Committee by appointment only.

**III. Awarding of Scholarships**

**A. Notification of families**

The parents/guardians of all awardees will be notified immediately after their selection by a Letter of Congratulations. Final approval will depend upon receipt of registration, registration fee, curriculum fee, financial information and having successfully completed an interview with the Headmaster.

**IV. Amount of scholarship**

A scholarship award is 1/3 of the stated tuition for a single student. At the discretion of the School Board, once all eligible students have been awarded a scholarship, additional awards may be granted while scholarship funds are available.

## **V. Renewal of Scholarship Awards**

### **A. Eligibility Requirements**

1. Income eligibility guidelines for continuing recipients are the same as those for new Applicants. Guidelines will be adjusted annually according to the rate of inflation.
2. Age/Academic Grade
  - a) Continuing recipients may renew their scholarships through the 12th grade as long as funds are available.
  - b) Any student who will reach the age of 20 before the beginning of the school year is not eligible to renew, even if he or she has not completed the 12th grade.
  - c) If the school recommends or requires that a continuing recipient repeat a grade level this will not affect the award provided that the student still meets the previous condition.
3. Standing with the School
  - a) The family must pay tuition from the past year in full before the award will be renewed.
  - b) The student must not have been expelled by the school at any time.
  - c) The student must maintain a satisfactory attendance record. The school must report excessive unexcused absences to the GCASF. An unacceptable attendance record may be grounds for dismissal from the scholarship program.

### **B. Annual Update Requirements**

1. Proof of income will be required each new calendar year, by June 1.
2. A new school enrollment form with enrollment fee and curriculum fee must be submitted to the school by July 1.
3. 3. GCA must verify that families are current on tuition payments as described in these rules and that students are maintaining satisfactory attendance records.

## **VI. Suspension and Termination of Scholarship Awards**

### **A. Dismissal**

1. Any student expelled from school for any reason will have his or her award terminated immediately. Siblings also receiving awards will not be affected. The expelled student will not be eligible to reapply for an award.
2. Any student suspended from school for any reason for more than one week will have his or her award suspended for the duration of the school suspension. The school should inform the GCASF of any suspensions of more than one week and the award amount will be adjusted accordingly.

### **B. Unpaid Tuition**

1. During School Year
  - a) Deficiencies of less than 10% of tuition during the school year will not affect the status of GCASF awards.

b) If the family is delinquent in paying tuition and owes more than 10% of the money due to date, the award will be suspended until at least 90% of the amount due to date has been paid.

2. Between School Years

a) Tuition must be paid in full for the previous year before the award will be renewed.

b) Families with tuition payments still due for the previous year at the beginning of a new school year will have their awards suspended until the old tuition is paid in full.

C. Other Causes for Scholarship Award Termination

1. If the family exceeds the income limit their scholarship may be terminated, pending individual consideration by the GCASF. If a family exceeds the income limit for more than two years in a row their scholarship must be terminated.

2. Any student who is disruptive to the school environment in their attitudes towards the teachers, Headmaster or other authority may be considered for award termination. This includes but is not limited to disrespect, non-compliance to school rules and dress codes, receiving grades well below their ability and unwillingness to do assigned schoolwork. The school is responsible for informing the GCASF of the above behavior.

D. All students or families whose awards have been terminated for any reason except expulsion are free to re-apply in future years if applications are being accepted. This will not affect in any way their chances of receiving a scholarship in the year for which they apply.

E. Any family who is experiencing a situation of extreme hardship that hinders them from meeting their financial obligation is encouraged to make an appointment to speak to the School Committee as soon as possible. It is the desire of the GCASF to assist in any way possible to ensure the students are able to remain in school.

F. The GCASF reserves the right to change policies and rules as may be found necessary. If at all possible, any changes would be made before the next school year starts.

G. Other scholarships may be available through GCA or from other sources. Please speak with the school secretary for more information.

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I have read and understand the above Grace Christian Academy Scholarship Fund guidelines. If my child(ren) is awarded a scholarship I agree to follow the guidelines to the best of my ability and agree to inform the School Committee of any changes as soon as possible.

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Signature of Parent/Guardian

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Date

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Student's Name

### \*Definition of Income

In accordance with the Department of Education's policy as provided in the Food and Nutrition Service publication Eligibility Manual for School Meals, "income," as the term is used in this Notice, means income before any deductions such as income taxes, Social Security taxes, insurance premiums, charitable contributions and bonds. It includes the following: (1) Monetary compensation for services, including wages, salary, commissions or fees; (2) net income from nonfarm self-employment; (3) net income from farm self-employment; (4) Social Security; (5) dividends or interest on savings or bonds or income from estates or trusts; (6) net rental income; (7) public assistance or welfare payments; (8) unemployment compensation; (9) government civilian employee or military retirement, or pensions or veteran's payments; (10) private pensions or annuities; (11) alimony or child support payments; (12) regular contributions from persons not living in the household; (13) net royalties; and (14) other cash income. Other cash income would include cash amounts received or withdrawn from any source including savings, investments, trust accounts and other resources that would be available to pay the price of a child's meal. "Income," as the term is used in this Notice, does not include any income or benefits received under any Federal programs that are excluded from consideration as income by any statutory prohibition.

6/4/23